

**Subject: Depopulation, Disposal, And Decontamination Services**

**Q: Is it true that the National Veterinary Stockpile (NVS) has commercial service contracts that will help states depopulate, dispose, and decontaminate if they do not have enough of their own personnel?**

**A:** Yes. The NVS has contracts to deploy multiple companies simultaneously to multiple outbreak sites. We refer to these contracts as **3D** for the range of **D**epopulation, **D**isposal, and **D**econtamination services they can provide.

**Q: What do the contracts include?**

**A:** The contracts are basic ordering agreements (BOA) the Coast Guard established competitively with companies that respond to all environmental hazards. BOA services include

- Skilled personnel and general laborers that are
  - Respirator fit tested and trained to use personal protective equipment in compliance with OSHA standards,
  - Trained and certified for Hazardous Waste Operations and Emergency Response (HAZWOPER),
  - Medically examined and approved by a physician to respond to hazardous situations,
  - Self-sufficient. The company will provide its own supplies and equipment,
  - Use to working in an incident command system. Our contractors typically report initially to the Planning Section Chief and then for the remainder of an event to the Operations Section Chief.
- Staffing that can expand dramatically; e.g. 600 personnel within 72 hours, 1,000 within 7 days, more when required.
- Equipment including
  - Large earth moving equipment such as bulldozers and backhoes
  - Vehicles of all types
  - Portable command centers with support modules for sleep, food, and hygiene
  - Communications radios,
  - Computers,
  - Personnel protective equipment
  - Depopulation equipment for poultry and large-animals. The NVS will own the equipment but its contractors will hold it, use it, maintain it, and repair it.
- Expertise in
  - Transporting and disposing of hazardous biologic waste
  - State permit processes for transport and disposal of biologic hazardous waste
  - Decontamination, cleaning, and disinfecting
  - Depopulation – a growing expertise from on the job training we provide

**Q: Do the contracts include any capability for performing services that are not on the BOA?**

**A:** Yes. The contracts include procedures for tasking the companies to perform services that are not on the BOA.

**Q: Do the contractors cover my area of the country?**

**A:** Yes. Here is the number of contractors that are available nationally and regionally:

- National: 3
- East: 3
- Southeast: 2
- Gulf: 4
- West: 2

**Q: How can I be confident that the contractors know what they're doing?**

**A:** The contractors we've vetted from the 80 available on the Coast Guard BOA are familiar with and operate constantly within the National Incident Management System that states and APHIS use to manage responses. When responding to hazards for other agencies, our contractors perform decontamination and disposal services daily, a frequency that makes them very proficient at what they do and expert on state requirements for transporting and disposing of hazardous waste. Depopulation is the one area where our contractors do not have extensive experience from work they've done in the past. We use on the job training supervised by veterinarians to train trainers from each of our contractors. Trainers, in turn, train their personnel.

**Q: My state has rigid regulations for the transport and disposal of hazardous materials. Will the contractors comply with the regulations?**

**A:** All of our contractors employ experts who know state regulations for transporting and disposing of hazardous waste. We ensure our contractors are familiar with likely disposal methods and can support agricultural officials use them:

- Onsite or remote composting,
- Onsite or remote burial,
- Thermal destruction (including air curtain incineration and fixed incineration), and
- Landfill.

**Q: How fast can the contractors be on site and what is their surge capability?**

**A:** Our contractors' initial staff will typically arrive within 24 hours and report to the incident commander. Depending upon services the commander requires, our contractors can have approximately 600 personnel on site within 72 hours and 1,000 within a week. How many respond and when they respond will depend on circumstances and requirements.

**Q: What if the scale of an event is larger than one contractor can handle?**

**A:** A common business practice in the all-hazards environmental response industry is for contractors to support one another. If one contractor does not have the resources to complete a job, it will typically sub-contract work to a competitor to get the job done.

**Q: How do I request 3D support?**

**A:** The process for requesting emergency 3D support from APHIS varies by state but generally includes

- Incident command (typically the State Veterinarian and the Federal Area Veterinarian In Charge) at an incident command post concluding that the state does not have enough people to respond to an outbreak.
- A conference call with incident command and the APHIS regional director to agree on the need and request for 3D assistance from the NVS
- A phone call to the NVS emergency management response hot line, 800.940.6524, requesting emergency assistance
- The order to deploy the assistance by the Deputy Administrator or Associate Deputy Administrator

**Q: What information should I provide when requesting 3D support?**

**A:** When APHIS' emergency response operator answers, request emergency assistance from the National Veterinary Stockpile. The operator will immediately contact us, and we will immediately contact you. We will want to know the type and amount of service you need (e.g. depopulation, disposal, and decontamination or a combination of one or more of the services) so we can get permission from senior management to proceed.

**Q: What will happen after APHIS' approves 3D support?**

**A:** Once APHIS approves the use of a 3D contractor, we will

- Consider the training, experience, and proximity of our 3D service providers and contact the one that can respond the fastest and provide the best support,
- Ask the APHIS' contracting office to authorize the company to proceed,
- Verify the company will charge the competitively set rates in our BOA,
- Request the company submit to the APHIS contracting officer a cost estimate for its work within the first several days of its response, and
- Convene a conference call with incident command, other officials, and the company to discuss the support the state needs, establish when and how the company will respond, and answer any questions.

The entire process from request to start of support should take no more than a couple hours.

**Q: Who will pay for contractor support?**

**A:** APHIS will typically pay for 3D services when it concludes the support is necessary and if the state follows the procedures above for requesting the support. States that do not follow the request process above must fund 3D contractor support themselves. APHIS will not be responsible for the charges.

**Q: I don't know much about the NVS. What does it do? What are its responsibilities?**

**A:** The National Veterinary Stockpile (NVS) is the nation's repository of vaccines, supplies, equipment, and other critical veterinary resources. Established by Homeland Security Presidential Directive 9 and operational in 2006, we are able to deploy large quantities of veterinary resources anywhere in the continental U.S. within 24 hours. We exist because of the nation's concern after 9/11 that terrorists could release animal diseases of catastrophic proportions that would

- Deplete State and local response inventories,
- Generate surge material requirements that would overwhelm traditional commercial sources, and
- Prevent unaffected States from providing significant help for fear of the threat crossing their borders.

**Q: If I have more questions, how do I get answers?**

**A:** Email us at [nvs@aphis.usda.gov](mailto:nvs@aphis.usda.gov). We will respond quickly.